

Michael F. Easley  
Governor



State of North Carolina  
Office of the Governor

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**GOV. EASLEY ANNOUNCES N.C. AMERICORPS PROGRAM NAMED AMONG MOST  
INNOVATIVE AMERICORPS PROGRAMS IN UNITED STATES**

**RALEIGH** – Gov. Mike Easley announced today that North Carolina's AmeriCorps Cross Cultural Education Service Systems (ACCESS) has been named as one of the most innovative AmeriCorps programs in the United States by Innovations in Civic Participation (ICP). ICP, a nonprofit organization that promotes youth engagement through service, has published a report which provides a summary of the 51 most innovative AmeriCorps programs in the United States. It will distribute the report to state service commissions, practitioners and policymakers across the country.

"As the non-English speaking population grows in North Carolina, breaking the language barrier becomes a significant challenge," Easley said. "ACCESS members address this challenge by providing important information and services to many people in our state."

ACCESS is housed in the University of North Carolina at Greensboro Center for New North Carolinians. AmeriCorps members serving with ACCESS provide interpretation, translation, transportation, information and referral services, and leadership development to the state's growing immigrant population. Along with teaching English, citizenship, and computer skills, members also offer disaster preparedness services in various languages.

Currently, there are 48 AmeriCorps members serving with the ACCESS project in 27 sites in Charlotte, Greensboro, Hickory, Mount Airy, Pittsboro, Raleigh, Siler City and Winston-Salem.

The ICP report, "Transforming Communities through Service: A collection of 51 of the most innovative programs in the United States," is available to download at [www.icicp.org](http://www.icicp.org). The report was funded by the Ford Foundation. Each state service commission nominated AmeriCorps programs and finalists were selected on the basis of lasting impact on the members, community or state, exceptional or unique partnerships, cross-program connection, volunteer and resource generation and potential for replication in other states.

The N.C. Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service, a federal- and state-funded agency housed in the Governor's Office, funds 15 AmeriCorps programs for the 2004-2005 program year. AmeriCorps members serve in more than 52 counties across the state. Members tutor and mentor school-aged youth, improve the quality of childcare for preschool children, address the need for affordable housing by building houses for low-income families and assist individuals with disabilities in gaining employment.

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